

Marlinon and Academy Mutual Telephone Company

The certificate of incorporation for this company cannot be found on record, but it was organized soon after the Marlinton, Knapps Creek and Dilleys Mill Company, probably late in the year of 1907, for on February 28, 1908 they appointed as their Attorney L. M. McClinton, and it was signed by J. L. McNeel, President, who no doubt was the first president of the company. (Deed Book 43, page 33)

On January 11, 1909 they purchased from the Noncevert and Elkins Telephone Company the following assets: "All of their rights and titles to the telephone line beginning at Paynes store in the village of Academy (now Hillsboro) and extending with two wires to the foot of the mountain near Wallace Beards and with one wire by way of Lobelia to Jacox together with all the branch wires and connections of said line, and all rights and privileges owned by the said party of the first part, necessary for the operation of said line." by G. C. Mohn, President (Deed Book 44, page 207)

This was the only mutual telephone company in the Little Levels District, but its assets have been purchased by the Pocahontas Telephone Company, on July 1, 1932.

Clover Lick and Durbin Mutual Telephone Co.

I find nothing what ever recorded about this company, but J. H. Bear, Sec. and Pres. of the Pocahontas Telephone Co. tells me that their assets were purchased by them several years ago. This company served the eastern part of the Greenbank District.



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The mutual telephone companies came into existence to lower the telephone rates and to make it possible for more people to have telephones. They built the lines at a time when the poles could be gotten from their own wood lots at little or no cost. They were organized on a non-profit basis and the stockholders were assessed only enough to offset the actual year to year cost of operation. No money was put in the treasury and held as a capital for the time when the lines needed to be rebuilt, therefore, after around twenty years they found themselves confronted with the problem of rebuilding and found that they had no money with which to rebuild. Then the Pocahontas Telephone Company was incorporated and the mutual companies one by one sold their assets to this company until at this time only the Marlinton and Elk Mutual Telephone Company remains in operation as a mutual company.

The mutual companies all used the grounded system of telephones, and all of the incorporators in these companies were local people who wished to make no profit therefrom. But the telephone, like most of our improvements, was begun by people from out of the county.

The party line of 25 years ago was no doubt the most used utility the people had at that time, not only for business but for pleasure as well. Farm homes kept in touch with each other by an almost daily telephone conversation. There are not more than half as many telephones in the county now as there were 25 years ago. Better roads and the automobile are part of the reason



At present (1941) the Pocahontas Telephone Company and the Marlinton and Elk Mutual Telephone Company are the only two in operation in the county. The Forestry Service, however, has about 60 or 70 miles of main pole line in the county with an exchange at Thornwood. Otherwise they have connection through the exchanges belonging to the Pocahontas Telephone Company. The Mutual Company has connection at Marlinton. The three exchanges or switchboards in the county are located at Marlinton, Cass and Hillsboro.

The Pocahontas Telephone Company has raised the amount of Authorized Capital Stock from the original \$15,000. to \$35,000. Their present officials are: E. H. Williams, Pres.; S. B. Wallace, Vice-Pres.; and J. M. Bear, Sec. and Treas.

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The old Konceverte and Elkins Telephone Company had lines to all of the principal places in the county. from Lewisburg to Marlinton, to Staunton, up through the county to Durbin, and from Marlinton to Elkins.



ROADS